



Wild Wales: Its People, Language & Scenery George Borrow

Wild Wales: Its People, Language and Scenery is a travel book by the English Victorian gentleman writer George Borrow (1803–1881), first published in 1862 and now a classic travel text on Wales and the Welsh. The book recounts Borrow's experiences, insights and personal encounters whilst touring Wales alone on foot after a family holiday in Llangollen in 1854. Although contemporary critics dismissed its whimsical tone, it quickly became popular with readers as a travel book and more importantly as a very lively account of the literary, social and geographical history of Wales. Borrow's engaging character comes across especially in his meetings with various itinerants – mostly native and peasant – along the muddy Welsh path. Borrow's keen ear for dialogue may remind us of a Dickens or Trollope, and like the latter his wit and wisdom are rarely absent. Indeed the author has been described as an "eccentric, larger-than-life, jovial man whose laughter rings all through the book". Borrow makes much of his self-taught Welsh and how surprised the natives are by his linguistic abilities – and also by his idiosyncratic pronunciation of their language. He loves to air his knowledge of Welsh culture, especially the Bardic tradition. And like his contemporary, William Wordsworth, he has a habit of quoting verses to the heavens as he walks. As the author finally reaches South Wales towards the end of his account, we meet for the first time evidences of modern industrialism, introduced to the reader in the form of a Dante's Inferno of coal mines and iron foundries. Today, most will remember and value the book for these and other vivid nineteenth-century landscapes – along with Borrow's gallery of fascinating, human characters. (SUMMARY BY STEVE GOUGH BASED ON WIKIPEDIA)

**Read by Steve Gough. Total running time: 22:55:10**

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